



MAN OF DISTINCTION



PHILIP S. THOMAS

Philip S. Thomas is currently the Vice President for Arts Education for the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) in Newark. Since joining NJPAC in 1992 he has been responsible for developing a comprehensive Arts Education Department for NJPAC that includes a performance series, school-based residency programs, professional development programs for educators and arts training programs in theater, dance, music and literary arts.

Philip S. Thomas has demonstrated a strong commitment to providing New Jersey residents, particularly its youngest citizens with the opportunity to participate in high quality performing arts experiences that stimulate creative expression, celebrate the rich cultural diversity of the arts, excite the imagination and enhance the joy of learning.

As a result of his dedication, Mr. Thomas is recognized as a leader in the development and implementation of community based arts education programming by the New Jersey arts community, state and local government and the private sector.

Mr. Thomas is a past President of the Board of Directors of the Newark Arts Council (1991), and served as a board member for the National Network of Cultural Centers of Color (1989-1992), and the National Association of Performing Arts Presenters (1991-1994). He was also appointed to the post of State Commissioner on the New Jersey State Council on the Arts by then Governor Jim Florio and served a three-year term (1991-1994).

Mr. Thomas' commitment to provide a forum for high caliber arts and cultural experiences has garnered him many awards of recognition and numerous professional distinctions. He presently serves on the Board of Trustees for the Alliance for Arts Education/New Jersey Institute for School Innovation and the Education Law Center.

During his career, Mr. Thomas has had the opportunity to work with notable performers such as: the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, American Ballet Theater, Maya Angelou, Amiri and Amina Baraka, Gwendolyn Brooks, Ruby Dee and Ossie Davis, Terri McMillan, Carmen McRae, James Moody, Toni Morrison and Sweet Honey in the Rock, to name a few.

Mr. Thomas was born in Virginia and grew up in Paterson, N. J. He graduated from Montclair State University in 1976 and served in the U. S. Army in Vietnam. Mr. Thomas is married to Greta Allen Thomas and is the father of one son, Terrance.



YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARD



CAPRICE BLACK

Caprice Black currently attends University High School and serves on the newspaper staff. She is involved with many organizations and activities, e.g., a member of Faithful Christian Ministries Church, a member of the Youth Choir, and the Vice-President of the Candy Strippers. Additionally, she is a proud member of the Nutley-Montclair Chapter of the New Jersey Orators, where she has received three \$100.00 Savings Bonds from the New Jersey Orators competitions for excellence in categories of Interpretation of Poetry, Prose, and Original Oratory. This Organization is a large part of her life, because through it she has spoken before many clubs and organizations, as well as being the keynote speaker for the Dr. Martin Luther King Day Celebration which was held at the George Washington Carver Elementary School.

Through her involvement with other Youth Groups, Caprice represented the Greater Essex Chapter of Jack and Jill of America at their Regional Cluster as a speaker on their theme "Leadership-Gateway into the Millennium. She also represented the Xinos of Delta Pi Chapter of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa at their annual teen conference in the oratorical competition held in Baltimore Maryland where she spoke on "How I Plan to Take Control Over My Destiny in the Twenty-First Century". Caprice received the First Place Trophy along with \$500.00.

CICELY TYSON SCHOOL JAZZ EMSEMBLE

The Cicely Tyson School Jazz Ensemble competed in the Peach Blossom Festival in Atlanta, Georgia and garnered four first-place awards. The competition consisted of twenty-two schools from various states, including South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, North Carolina and New Jersey.

Mr. Thaddeus Hammond, assistant band director stated that the band won first-place in the High School Jazz Band category with a superior rating and also won the award for the Most Outstanding Instrumental Group.

This year the band again returned to Atlanta and once again won first-place in the high school category.

The group consists of fifteen students, one parent chaperone and an assistant director. Mrs. Diane Robinson, the parent chaperone stated that "these trips are outstanding affirmations of our program."